

REMARKS

Applicants' undersigned attorney thanks the Examiner for her comments. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this patent application, particularly in view of the above Amendment and the following remarks. Currently, Claims 1-15, 17-37, 40, 41, 46-56, 58, and 59 are pending.

Amendment to the Claims

Claims 1-15, 17-37, 40, 41, 46-56, 58, and 59 have been examined, and Claims 17, 18, 40, and 58 have been indicated as being allowable.

Claims 1 and 21 have been amended to include the limitations of Claims 17 and 40, respectively. Thus, Applicants respectfully request cancellation of Claims 17 and 40.

No new matter has been added by this Amendment. No additional fee is due for this Amendment because the number of independent claims remains unchanged and the total number of claims has been reduced.

Information Disclosure Statements

Applicants submitted a First Information Disclosure Statement on 08 April 2002 and a Second Information Disclosure Statement on 26 June 2003. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner's acknowledgment of consideration of each of the references cited in the First and Second Information Disclosure Statements.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103

The rejection of Claims 1-15, 19-37, 41, 46-56, and 59 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Cesco-Cancian (U.S. Patent No. 6,168,585) is respectfully traversed.

As indicated by the Examiner under the heading "Allowable Subject Matter," while Cesco-Cancian teaches an absorbent capacity of 300 grams, it does not teach or suggest a capacity lower than 300 grams. Independent Claims 1, 21, and 46 each recite the limitation of an absorbent core having an overall absorbent capacity of

about 130 grams to about 200 grams. As further pointed out by the Examiner, this range of absorbent capacity is neither anticipated nor rendered obvious by the Cesco-Cancian reference and there is no suggestion to modify the reference to arrive at the lower absorbent capacity, especially in view of the teaching of a desirably higher absorbent capacity.

For at least the reasons given above, Applicants respectfully submit that the teachings of Cesco-Cancian fail to disclose or suggest Applicants' claimed invention. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has indicated that Claims 17, 18, 40, and 58 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants have amended independent Claims 1 and 21 to include the limitations of Claims 17 and 40, respectively. Thus, amended Claims 1 and 21 are now essentially the independent form of Claims 17 and 40, respectively. Independent Claim 46 already includes the limitation of an absorbent core having an overall absorbent capacity of about 130 grams to about 200 grams. Therefore, for at least the reasons set forth by the Examiner for considering Claims 17, 18, 40, and 58 allowable, Applicants believe that all pending claims, namely Claims 1-15, 18-37, 41, 46-56, 58, and 59, are now in allowable form.

Conclusion

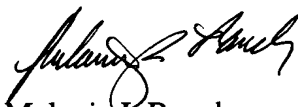
Applicants intend to be fully responsive to the outstanding Office Action. If the Examiner detects any issue which the Examiner believes Applicants have not addressed in this response, Applicants' undersigned attorney requests a telephone interview with the Examiner.

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Applicants sincerely believe that this Patent Application is now in condition for allowance and, thus, respectfully request early allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Melanie I. Rauch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Melanie" and last name "Rauch" clearly distinguishable.

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